

**10 June, 2024**  
**Helsinki, Finland**



## **Declaration**

### **CELEBRATING THE CULTURAL COLLABORATION AND MOVING FORWARD**

We, the Ministers of Culture and other high-level representatives from the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture partner countries of Estonia, Finland, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Norway, Poland and Sweden, reaffirm our commitment to the Nordic and Baltic Sea Region cooperation with a shared vision of leading the way to more sustainable, creative, and prosperous societies.

Over the 14 years since its establishment in 2010, the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture has proven to be a unique and valued platform for cooperation. It has benefited all its partners and stakeholders by serving as a forum for enhanced collaboration, sharing of knowledge and best practices, enhancing the role of culture and creative sector in sustainable development and innovation.

In the joint statement of 8 March 2022, the European Union, Iceland, and Norway suspended, until further notice, all activities of the Northern Dimension Policy with Russia and Belarus. The European Union, Iceland, and Norway have condemned, in the strongest possible terms, Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. With its illegal invasion of Ukraine, Russia flagrantly violates international law and the United Nations Charter, undermining European and global security and stability. The Partnership, in its current form, does not collaborate with countries that violate international laws.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has triggered the largest humanitarian crisis in recent European history, causing human suffering, destruction, and untold damage to Ukraine's cultural sector, its infrastructure as well as to cultural heritage. The current Partnership emphasizes the need to preserve and promote democratic values, including freedom of creation, cultural diversity, freedom of expression, the movement of artists, and the protection of cultural heritage.

In the spirit of shared responsibility for the sustainability of Northern Europe and the well-being of its population, we underline the importance of providing support to Ukraine. Therefore, the current Partnership proposes granting Ukraine an observer status within the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture. This step would be beneficial for Ukraine and the current partner countries, leading to enhanced exchange and joint future collaborations.

Henceforth, we as the signatories of this declaration remain committed to developing the Partnership's role as a forum for value-based cooperation. The Partnership continues to contribute to the regional agenda by building the capacities of policymakers, experts, and practitioners in the culture and creative sector. This work is made possible only through a well-functioning, policy-connected regional collaboration platform like the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture.

We hereby commit to ensuring that also in the future our collaboration in the Nordic-Baltic Sea Region will be underpinned by our common commitment to democratic values and our shared aspiration to empower cooperation to flourish in the framework of the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture.

**Denmark**

Mr Jakob Engel-Schmidt  
Minister of Culture

**Estonia**

Mr Sven Sakkov  
Ambassador

**Finland**

Ms Elina Laavi  
State Secretary

**Germany**

Mr Christoph Ubbo Peleikis  
Minister-Counsellor

**Iceland**

Ms Arna Thorgeirsdottir  
Deputy to the Ambassador,  
Trade and Cultural Representative

**Latvia**

Ms Dace Vilsone  
State Secretary

**Norway**

Ms Ina Nygård Mossin  
First Secretary

**Poland**

Ms Marta Cienkowska  
Deputy Minister of Culture and  
National Heritage

**Sweden**

Ms Parisa Liljestränd  
Minister of Culture